

Human Services Funding Committee / Community Development Committee (CDC)
October 13, 2009

Committee Members Attending: Mary Jane Laus, Lewis Rudolph, Paulette Brooks, Isaac BenEzra, Claude Tellier and Jana McClure.

Town Staff: Roy Rosenblatt

Handout: Memo To Roy Rosenblatt from Rose Evans, Center for Human Development dated October 13, 2009, Re: University Drive Property

The Tuesday, October 13, 2009 Community Development Committee met in the Town Room, Town Hall beginning at 6:05 p.m. Ms. McClure chaired the meeting.

Mr. Rosenblatt reported to the committee that there is \$140,000 unspent Community Development Block Grant Funds from the capital expenditure portion of the 2008 budget. This amount should be encumbered by February 2010 because the grant requires a timely expenditure or the funds must be returned. The committee must hold another public hearing soon to determine what projects fit the grant criteria.

Rose Evans, the Program Director for the Center for Human Development [CHD] has submitted a proposal (see handout) for a portion of these funds (\$73,000).

The committee discussed the proposal at length. Questions that the committee would like answered are:

1. What is the public benefit to the proposal? What is the market rate for the rental? This is a private enterprise, so what is the benefit for the community will receive and who will actually benefit from the public funds? What contingencies will be placed on the private sector negotiations? Would the rent be reduced for a specific time?
2. Can the parties sign a commitment for 15 years? How do the smaller agencies get a benefit?
3. What is the CHD's financial commitment and level of resources to make this proposal? Is it truly needed and how will this financially benefit them? Why did CHD determine \$15,000 was the amount they could match?
4. Is this funding predominately for Amherst services, considering that CHD is a regional organization.

Benefits discussed were:

1. Location is set on public transportation availability and would comprise "one stop for multiple services for low and moderate income clients"
2. This would help the smaller non-profits under CHD. They have seen many financial setbacks and more cuts are coming. This would be a nominal contribution to these agencies.
3. This would place a clinic outreach satellite in Amherst with an available sheltering for the homeless in future.

Mr. Lewis Rudolph disclosed that he has been a consultant with CHD in the past and that he was willing to abstain from any vote.

Mr. Rosenblatt reported that \$30,000 of the CDBG funds were offset by the Waxman monies (lawsuit trust designated for emergency housing); in addition so far this year \$11,000 has been spent for emergency assistance with family heating and rental crisis aid. The housing for the Homeless feasibility study was distributed by e-mail and the project was discussed.

The committee encouraged Mr. Rosenblatt to contact the Amherst Library and any other organization that could present a proposal for the available funds.

The committee agreed to meet again next Tuesday, October 20, 2009 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Amherst Police Station in the community room. The committee also plans to hold a public hearing in about two weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Paulette Brooks